



The Church at Thyatira

A Bit of History



Thyatira remains



ocated in what is today Turkey 45 miles southeast of Pergamos, on the Hermus River, Thyatira was an ancient city of Asia Minor and was founded as Pelopia, a shrine to the Lydian sun-god Tyrimnus. The city was eventually rebuilt and made into a frontier garrison and its name changed to Thyatira.

It was also the center for the manufacturing of the craft and trade guilds that made prosperous use of the natural resources of the area. Thyatira was also famous for its highly organized trade unions (cooperatives) and specialization in purple dye made from the madder root rather than the more expensive shellfish. Lydia in Acts 16:14 was a “purple” merchant and a convert to Judaism who came from Thyatira.

Acts 16:14, “Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.”

The apostle Paul visited the city on a number of occasions during his missionary travels. The ancient city is today a ruin.

The Forth Message to The Church at Thyatira

(Revelation 2:18-29)

The lax, corrupt church under the Roman Catholic Church – A.D. 538 to A.D. 1514

The church that became part of an evil cult

The Commendation: “I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last are more than the first.”

The Complaint: “Because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and the hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

The Promise: “But unto you I say, unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who over comes and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.”

A Closer Look at Thyatira

In His commendation of this Church, Christ lays the emphasis on their “works,” as if they depended on them, and claimed they deserved merit for “works” that went beyond what was required of them. But He had a complaint to make against them that was terrible in its implications.

He charges them not merely with permitting a bad woman, Jezebel, who called herself a “Prophetess,” to remain in the Church, but with permitting her to teach her pernicious doctrines, and to seduce the servants of God into committing fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Who this woman was is a question. She was a pretender, and called herself a prophetess. She was of noble lineage, for she certainly was a woman of commanding influence. However, whether her real name was Jezebel or not, she was so much like her prototype in the Old Testament, (Jezebel, a Phoenician Princess and the wife of Israel’s King Ahab, 1 Kings 16-21) that Christ called her by that name.

Ahab, the King of Israel, to strengthen his kingdom, married Jezebel, and she, aided and abetted by Ahab, introduced the licentious worship of Baal into Israel and killed all the prophets of the Lord she could lay her hands on (1 Kings 18). Jezebel was a zealous idolater, extremely imperious and malicious in her natural temper. She was addicted to witchcraft and whoredoms and vicious in every way.

There is no question that whether Jezebel was a real person or not, she typified a system and that system was the **PAPAL CHURCH**. When the Papal Church introduced images and pictures into its churches for the people to bow down to, it became idolatrous. And when it set up its claim that the teaching of the Church is superior to the Word of God, it assumed the role of Prophetess.

A careful study of the Papal System from A.D. 606 to the Reformation A.D. 1520, with its institution of the Sacrifice of the Mass and other Pagan rites, reveals in it the sway of Jezebelism. It was also a period of Jezebelistic persecution, as seen in the wars of the Crusades and the rise of the Inquisition.

A careful comparison of this message with the Parable of The Leaven will reveal the wonderful correspondence between the two, the Jezebel of the Church of Thyatira, being the Woman of the parable, who inserted the Leaven of the False Doctrine into the Meal of the Gospel. This Period extended from A. D. 606 to the Reformation A. D. 1520.